



Everyone Needs an Emergency Plan

Pledge to Prepare during National Preparedness Month

Do you have an emergency plan?

Last year Virginians suffered through Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, which caused deaths, injuries and extensive property damage. Many people and communities still are recovering. What should you do now to prepare for this year's hurricane/flooding season?

- ***Make a family emergency plan.*** This may be the single most important action you can take, and it won't cost you a cent. Discuss with your family what you will do in an emergency and how you will get in touch with each other. Write down your plan, and share it with family and friends. Get a free emergency plan worksheet at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.
- ***Choose an out-of-town emergency contact.*** Identify an out-of-town relative or friend for your family to call when there is an emergency. Here's why: often it's easier to make a long distance call than a local call when phone networks are jammed, and families may not be together when an emergency happens. Here's what to do: make sure each person in your family has the phone number of your out-of-town relative or friend. When an emergency happens, no matter where your family members are, they each should call the out-of-town contact and say they are OK. Then the out-of-town contact can in turn call the other family members to relay messages.
- ***Set aside emergency supplies.*** Have enough on hand to last at least three days for each family member. You need food that won't spoil, such as canned goods and packaged foods and one gallon of water per person per day. A battery-powered or hand-crank radio is important for hearing information when the power is out. When you are gathering supplies, remember your family members with special needs and your pets, too.

September is National Preparedness Month and a great time to take these simple steps. If you want to take a pledge that during September you will prepare your family or organization for emergencies, visit www.Ready.gov and click on the "Pledge to Prepare" banner.

For more information on preparing for emergencies, go to www.ReadyVirginia.gov or www.ListoVirginia.gov.

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